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MONOLOGUE

BY

MARY MONCURE PARKER

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## HOW MANDY GOT THE VOTE.

You see Liza Johnsing, 'twas this a way—wait a minute. I gwine to laugh. Tehee! Whopee! Honey! I was jest a thinkin' of Mose's face. Tehee! Yes, yes, I'm gwine to tell you—quit gittin' so rambunctious. I'm gwine to tell you in a minute, when I gets myself compose—Tehee! You see the lady what Matildy wuks fur was gwine to entertain some of them suffragistes, you know what I mean, them women what thinks women ought to vote. The funny thing was dat me an' Mose had been discoursuatin' on dat very subjec' jes' dat mawnin'. Mose kin throw mo' knowledge out of his pussonnality in ten minutes settin' roun' a base burner stove dan any ten men kin dissorb in a lifetime.

"Women vote," says Mose. "Why women ain't got no right to vote," Mose says, smokin' an' expecturatin' in the stove. "Dey got 'nuff to do stayin' home lookin' after dey houses.

"Woman's speer am washin' an' ironin' an' takin' keer of the offspring's, 'thout putterin' roun' whar men b'longs. Women wouldn't know how to run de gov'munt nohow. They'd jes' stan' 'round' de polls an' talk 'bout dey hats an' dresses!" Now, Liza Johnsing, I'd be libely to talk 'bout dis ole black dress of mine, ain't had a new one fur free years, an' as fur discussin' dis heah thing on mah head Mose calls a hat, well the feathers on it looks lak a pullet what had been out in the rain fur a week.

For the New York 10 Mar 56 Liza Johnsing

"Why, mos' women don't know what polls is," said Mose contemptuatiiously.

"Now your'e gitten' a little too abusin', Mose Brown," says I. "Ev'body knows what a pole am. Dar's clothes poles an' winder poles an' de' Norf Pole." Then Mose busted out laffin' lak he gwine to bust his sides. "I tole you dat you didn't have no idee 'bout polls," says Mose, "polls is places whar men goes to vote."

"I don' know nothin' 'bout them pollin' places," I says, "spec dey's saloons ef de men goes dar. But I knows 'bout de Norf Pole, Mose Brown, an' ef a woman had gone dar da wouldn't been none of dese yeah disputations goin' on. She'd a brung it back fur proof, an' dat would a settled it."

"Look a heah; woman," Mose say, "you ain't got no bettah idee 'bout de Norf Pole dan you has 'bout pollin' places. Don' you know dat de Norf Pole runs clar froo de Earth an' sticks out at each end? How you gwine to pull it out?"

Well dat kin' of floored me, Liza, kase I nevah knowed befo' dat de Pole did run clar froo de earth. Course I might a knowed, kase dat's what keeps de earth togedder, what it turns on, course.

"Sides," says Mose, continuin' (an' Mose's conversation is one long continuation when he gits started, he hol's on lak a dog to a bone, nevah do want to let go,) "'sides woman, don' you know de Bible say woman am de weaker vessel? Didn't de Lawd make Eve outen a rib of Adam fur to show she was in subjugations to him?"

Liza, I'm so sick of dat rib story de men's is allus bringin' up, I clar I suttinly am, an' I fires up an' says, "Go on, man, I don't take it dat a way and neveh did. The Lawd kep' makin' an' improvin' an' improvin' an'



consequentious Eve bein' made after Adam shows she was a improvement on him."

Well, Liza, to get to my story—you see I went ovah to he'p Matildy, kase the lady what she wuks fur promised me a dollah an' a half fur the afternoon, an' I tended do' when the women come in. Dere was a lot of these heah little foldin' cheers an' the women set roun' lak in a church, an' one woman talked, well, dey was all talkin' some of de time, but one of em did de mos' talkin'. I can't member all she said (I was in de hall mos' of de time an' I couldn't hep hearin' some.). She said de women was clawin' an' tearin' fur dey rights in, let's see, whar was de place? Hit sounded som'thin lak Englewood, but seem lak twan't dat needer, kase I does washin, dere ev'y Monday an' I suttinly would a heard 'bout sech goin's on. Well, Liza, she say anyhow dat dey was clawin' somewhar an' dey ought to get up an' claw an' tear ovah heah. She said, too, Liza dat women was classed wiv children an' ijits. I clar foah gracious, Liza Johnsing, some of dem acts jes lak ijits, sometimes fur sho. An' she tole 'em, too' dat women had either ought to be suppoted by the men or else they'd ought to vote, an' I come neah bustin' out laffin' when I thought of Mose suppotin' me. Mose ain't done a lick of wuk fur ten yeahs. Says his side's too weak. You'd think he was Adam wid one rib gone. Well, Liza, after we'd give them suffragistes some tea an' wafers, I s'pose them brainy women don't need substantious food, Matildy an' me had a good square meal in de kitchen, an' she give me some butter an' sugar an' things to take home with me. Course she didn't say nothin' 'bout it to the lady what she wuks fur. I kep' turnin' ovah an' ovah in my min' what dat woman said when I was settin' in the cah goin' home an' made up my min' dat Mose was either gwine to suppote me or else

shet his mouf up on the question of women's votin', kase I was sick of the s'perior air he sumes when he speaks 'bout women bein' the weaker sextes. I foun' Mose settin' in the same spot. Mose is as patient as a ole hen 'bout settin', an' a honen', Mose kin hone fur mo' things in a minute dan you kin git in a yeah. Sometimes it's water-million an' sometimes it's 'possum an' sometimes it's chicken, but he ain't nevah honin' fur wuk. "Mose," says I, "I don' keer nothin' 'bout votin'." "Course you don'," says Mose, "tain't a women's speer." "An Mose," says I, "I ain't gwine to wuk no mo'."

"Aint gwine to wuk," says Mose. "Why how we gwine to live?"

"Live? Why you gwine to wuk an' 'suppote me. Ain't I the weaker vessel what the Lawd made?"

Liza, dat niggah putty nigh turned white, he was so skeered. "Mandy, honey," says Mose, "you know what, I neveh has passed sech a misserble day in my life. I'se had de misery in mah side an' I aint had no appetite."

"Who et them poke chops?" I says, lookin' at de em'ty fryin' pan on de stove.

"Well I had to worry somethin' down, chile, fur feah of feelin' wus. I tell yo', Mandy, ef I don' feel bettah, I'm gwine to take to mah bed tomorrah. I'm a sick man, honey."

An' t'want no foolin' with Mose, Liza, I had dat niggah skeered putty night into fits. You nevah seen a man so subjugation in yo' life.

Why he was lak a lamb, an' he sho nuff staid in bed fo' a week. When Pete Williams come ovah one day he brung up the subjec' of his own acco'd in mah hearin', the subjec' of votin'.

"Dar's goin' to be a big change in dis heah country, Pete, an' I'm gwine to he'p bring it about. That's 'bout



women's votin'. Don't the constituency of the United States say dat all men's is free an' equal? An' dat means de women, too, of course. Yes sah, I tell yo', man, dat de women has to have a voice in dis heah gov'munt, an' I'm gwine to vote dat a way at de next 'lections."

Lize, I neahly burnt de shirt I was ironin', fur laffin'. I sho has Mose's consent to vote ef I wants to, chile. Wait a minute, I got to laugh agin when I thinks of Mose's face.

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ACT III—Same as ACT I. A night in March—The Red Light on the Snow.

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